

NEW SHOREHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Block Island School

December 13, 2010

7:00 p.m.

The New Shoreham School Committee met in open session on Monday, December 13, 2010, in the cafeteria of the Block Island School. Chair William Padien called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The following members were present: Elizabeth Connor, Patricia Doyle, Annie Hall, Sean McGarry, and William Padien. Robert Hicks was also in attendance.

Approval of Minutes

A motion (McGarry, Connor) to approve the minutes of the meeting held on November 15, 2010, as presented carried with a vote of 5-0.

Reports

William Padien reported that he had attended the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting where a discussion on co-teaching was held. Mr. Hicks explained that any co-teaching model will develop over time as each classroom would have different students with different needs. As needs arise you draw on different models to best suit your requirements.

Mr. Hicks reported that the Board of Regents (BOR) is considering substantial changes to the proficiency graduation system, which would affect several areas, including how approval is granted to schools and how diplomas are awarded to English language learners (ELLs) and students with IEPs. The BOR is considering a tiered diploma system, which would include four levels of diplomas (honors, proficiency, RI, and certificate) based on student scores on state assessments in English/language arts (ELA) and mathematics. Mr. Hicks stated that if there is a discrepancy between ELA and math scores on the NECAP then the math scores would drive the determination as to which diploma students receive, distorting the outcome. He recommended putting our policy discussion on hold until the BOR makes a final decision, and, if necessary, amend the policy to meet new requirements. When asked if there was anything the School Committee could do if it doesn't agree with the new system, Mr. Hicks suggested that the members could set its own criteria for honors and proficient diplomas, making it impossible for students to meet that criteria or send in written testimony to and/or attend the hearings that will be held in the spring.

Mr. Hicks submitted a memorandum regarding the status of the Southern Rhode Island Collaborative (SORICO), which is currently in financial crisis. Forward View Academy will be closing and RINET will be ending its lease at the end of this school year. With the departure of these two entities SORICO no longer has the operating revenue to sustain itself and support its building. The executive director has resigned and only a skeleton staff remains. The board voted to initiate the leasing or selling of the building, which is valued at approximately \$900,000, but there is a mortgage of approximately 40 percent of that amount. If the building is sold the board will consider disbanding.

The finance report through November 30, 2010, was submitted for School Committee review. Mr. Hicks reported that the numbers are slightly more positive than last month. He and Mrs. Martin worked with Ms Doran on the maintenance budget and that should remain within budget at the end of the year. The other piece they are watching closely is special education evaluations which are down from last year, but still a bit high. A motion (Padien, Hall) to accept the standing of accounts through November 30, 2010, carried with a vote of 5-0.

Mr. Hicks submitted a memo regarding the budget development for 2011-2012, with a proposed timeline of January 10 through February 14 with a reserve date of February 28 if the budget has not been resolved on the 14th. Mr. Padien requested a tighter timeline with budget adoption on February 7. Meetings/workshops are scheduled for January 10, 24, and 31, with the budget adoption on February 7.

Old Business

A motion (Padien, McGarry) to approve Policy HM: Special Education Staffing as amended carried with a vote of 5-0. The wording in the fourth bulleted item on the second page was changed from “collaboration with SORICO” to “collaboration with the appropriate agencies.”

A motion (Padien, Hall) to approve Policy IQ-1: Publication of Student Images as posted carried with a vote of 5-0.

Mr. Hicks submitted a memo regarding an unbudgeted item of \$14,743.97, which is to cover the retirement costs of a previous employee who was not included in the state retirement system for the first year of her employment. The employee was eligible to join the retirement system during that period and is now seeking to purchase that time. The state law was changed a few years ago and if the person wants to buy back that time the school department must also contribute its share. Mr. Hicks stated that if we don't pay now it will cost more in actual dollars when the person retires. A motion (McGarry, Doyle) to approve the distribution of \$14,743.97 to the state retirement board for an employee's first year of employment carried with a vote of 5-0.

New Business

A motion (Hall, Padien) to approve the request from Jamie Johnston and Zena Clark to home school their son, Fisher, while on an extended family vacation from January 31 through March 4, 2011, carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Hall, Padien) to approve the request from Alba Santana to home school her son, Hector, while on an extended family vacation from December 6, 2010, through January 11, 2011, carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Hall, Connor) to approve the request from William Padien to home school his daughter, Mikhaela, from February 7 through March 2, 2011, and his son, Jameson, from February 14 through March 2, 2011, while on an extended family vacation carried with a vote of 4-0, with Mr. Padien having recused himself.

A motion (Connor, Hall) to approve Kristine Monje's request for tuition reimbursement for two courses she will be taking towards her Masters degree (EDU 690 Action Research Project; EDU

695 Portfolio) pursuant to the terms and conditions of the School Committee/Teachers' Contract carried with a vote of 5-0.

A list of proposed School Committee meeting dates for the 2011 calendar year was submitted for review. It was noted that the meetings are normally held at 7:00 p.m. on the third Monday of the month with the exception of January, February, and April because of the Martin Luther King Day holiday and the winter/spring recesses. It was suggested that the February meeting be changed from the 14th to the 7th and the June meeting be changed from the 20th to the 13th. A motion (Padien, Connor) to approve the meeting dates as amended (change February from 14 to 7 and June from 20 to 13) carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Padien, Hall) to consent to the appointment of Mark Hawk as the part-time special education director carried with a vote of 5-0. It was noted that Mr. Hawk will work 72 days during the school year and eight days during the summer. He will also be paid at the interim rate until salary negotiations have been completed and approved by the School Committee. Mr. Hicks thanked the screening committee, which included Derek van Lent, Barbara MacMullen, Lauri McTeague, Donna Smith, Jaixen Hall, and John Canole, who put in considerable time and effort in reaching the unanimous recommendation.

Calendar of Events

A calendar of events for the months of December and January was submitted for School Committee information. The next regular meeting is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. on Monday, January 10, 2011.

Correspondence

It was noted that the Town Council meeting with Interstate Navigation regarding possible changes to the ferry schedule will be held at 12:00 p.m. on December 16.

Executive Session

A motion (Padien, Hall) at 8:35 p.m. to go into executive session pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws 42-46-4, 5(a)(2) for contract negotiations carried with a vote of 5-0.

Open Session

A motion (Padien, Hall) at 9:01 p.m. to return to open session carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Padien, McGarry) to seal the executive session minutes carried with a vote of 5-0.

Adjournment

A motion (Padien, McGarry) at 9:02 p.m. to adjourn carried with a vote of 5-0.

Date approved

Marsha L. Gutierrez, Clerk

**Double asterisk is used to define motions in the minutes for easier identification.